

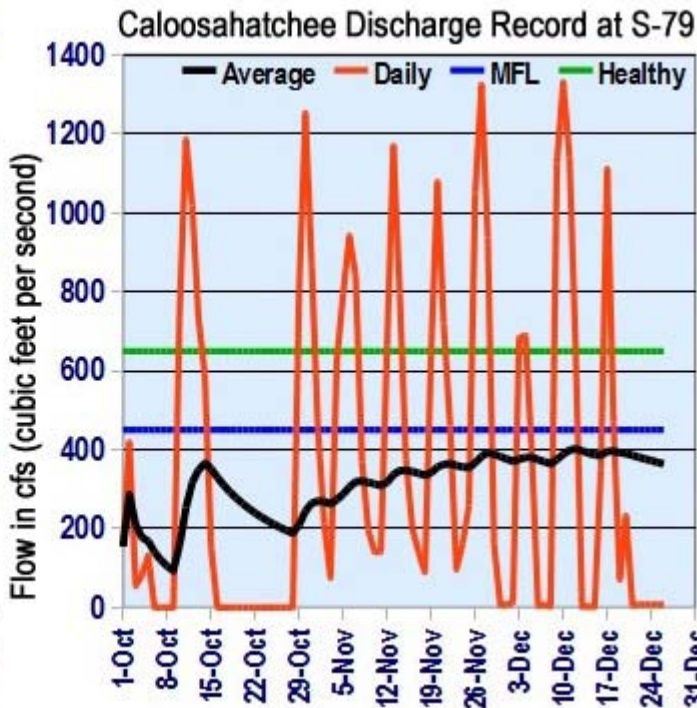
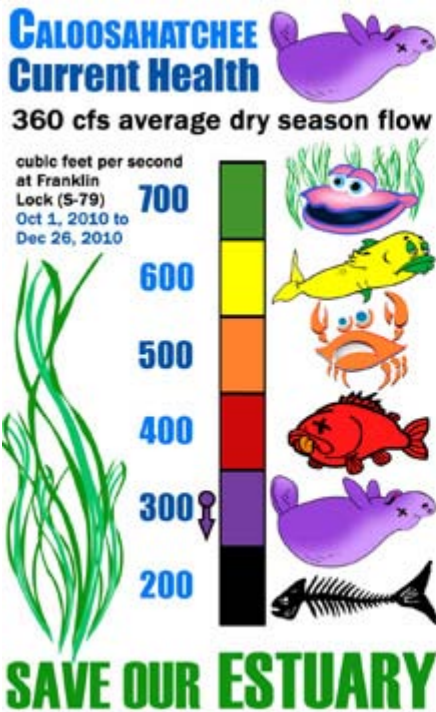
The Flow

December 2010 Newsletter
Dr. Annette Snapp, President

Special Events & Meetings

- Jan 5: [CRCA Meeting](#), 6:30 PM in LaBelle
- Jan 9: River Roots & Ruts [Trail Run](#), 8 AM at Caloosahatchee Regional Park
- Jan 23: SCCF Caloosahatchee [Oxbows Tour](#)
- Feb 26: CRCA Swamp Cabbage Festival [River Cruise](#) at 2 PM

For more river news visit the CRCA web site at crca.caloosahatchee.org
Also, you can renew your membership online



Corps of Engineers water releases to estuary are short of 450 cfs MFL

Seagrass, Manatee & the Cold



Insufficient freshwater flows to the estuary kills off the seagrass on which the manatee depend (specifically tape grass or *Vallisneria americana* in the Caloosahatchee upper estuary). Without a sufficient food supply the manatee become malnourished and at risk of dying during cold snaps. [\[Collier Sea Grant\]](#) [\[Congregation\]](#) [\[Science\]](#)

PURRE & DEP Monitor Wastewater



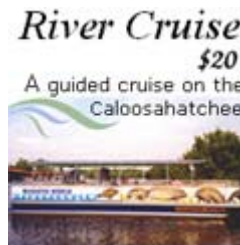
PURRE Water Coalition asked Ft Myers & DEP to improve the waste water treatment plant discharging chlorination byproducts (THMs) to the river, which could affect fish. A fix will take time and money. Side note - Jon Iglehart is one of the DEP officials asked by Scott to transition out in 60 days. [\[NBC-2\]](#) [\[PURRE\]](#)

Environment Scott Top Priority



Governor Elect Rick Scott's transition plans identify the environment as a top priority. The transition team proposes to eliminate the two state agencies dealing with environmental issues (DEP & DCA) by burying them under the much larger DOT, whose budget in more than 3 times that of DCA+DEP. [\[Tampa Tribune\]](#) [\[Concept\]](#) [\[Resignation\]](#) [\[Plan\]](#)

Canoe & Cruise Time Again!



Start planning to participate in the Riverwatch 2011 Swamp Cabbage Festival traditions - canoe contest (\$2) & river cruise (\$20). Master naturalist Margaret England, SCCF's Rae Ann Wessel, & LaBelle Museum's Joe Thomas are your tour guides for the 3pm cruise on Sat, Feb 26. [\[Contest Poster\]](#) [\[Email for Tickets\]](#)

River Roots Volunteers Needed



Riverwatch volunteers are needed for the River Roots & Ruts Trail Run on Sat, Jan 9. At 6:30 AM to sign in runners and to get coffee and bagels. You can also help with parking or at aide stations giving out water and Gatorade. [\[Request\]](#)

No MFL in Estuary Stocking



With Lake Okeechobee dropping below 12.5 feet (a foot lower than last year) SFWMD and Corps of Engineers halted releases to the Caloosahatchee Estuary. Flows this dry season never reached the MFL of 450 cfs, much less the healthy level of 650 cfs. [\[Flow Graph\]](#) [\[Orlando Sentinel\]](#) [\[Situation\]](#) [\[Data\]](#) [\[Cartoon Graphic\]](#)

State Courts Not an Option?

DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL
FIRST DISTRICT
STATE OF FLORIDA
CASE NO. 1D09-4956
HAWKES and THOMAS, CONCUR
VAN NORTWICK, DISSENTS
WITH WRITTEN OPINION

Politicians & agencies have always been uncertain in enforcing environmental & growth management laws, but the courts generally offered citizens a chance of enforcement. A new split-decision (2-1) ruling may show that state courts are no longer a realistic

option. [\[Tampa Tribune\]](#) [\[Ruling\]](#) [\[Court\]](#)

Lake Okeechobee Conditions



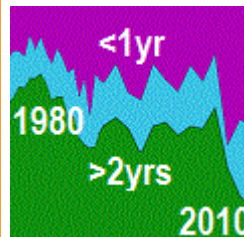
Dr. Paul Gray reports Lake Okeechobee marsh bottoms that SFWMD scraped to remove organic sediments have re-grown with the desired spike rush and bladderwort plant communities, as opposed to adjacent un-scraped areas still dominated by brush, and holding few birds. [\[Audubon News\]](#)

Cape Coral Clogged Canals



Residents complain of canals clogged with aquatic plants covering the bottom and rising to the surface fowling boat motors. County services have tried killing the plants but excessive nutrients in the waters cause rapid regrowth. [\[WZVN\]](#)

Less White Christmas for Arctic



2010 will go on record as the worst for the Arctic ice cap. Ice volumes are dramatically lower than even the record lows of 2007. Of the remaining Arctic Ocean ice, less than 10% is more than 2 years old. [\[Volume Trend Line\]](#) [\[Ice Trends\]](#) [\[Extreme Events Index\]](#) [\[Age of Arctic Ocean Ice\]](#)

Application Grudgingly Submitted



After losing the Ceitus Boat Lift vote, Cape Coral submitted a permit application that invites DEP denial. It appears to be a coordinated effort to delay the permit process for years as their latest step to avoid living up to their legal obligation. [\[DEP Appeal\]](#) [\[Opposition\]](#) [\[Permit1\]](#) [\[Permit2\]](#) [\[Permit3\]](#)

More Deception by Cape Coral



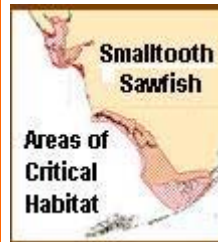
Cape Coral sent residents a misleading newsletter on the Ceitus Boat Lift controversy. They suggest the Feds backed the Cape's resistance to reinstalling the canal block when in fact FWS voted with CRCA to restore the barrier. The vote was 14-4 (with DEP and SWFRPC abstaining). [\[Reaction\]](#) [\[Article\]](#) [\[Vote\]](#)

Ouch, That Is Harsh, Hiaasen!



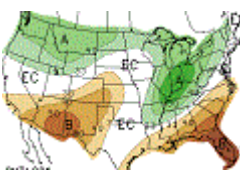
Carl Hiaasen doesn't mince words in his disgust with the conduct of Florida politicians in suing the EPA as part of unending effort by Florida to block the new EPA water quality standards. [\[Hiaasen\]](#) [\[Letter\]](#) [\[Editorial\]](#) [\[Court\]](#)

Permits & Sawfish Protection



Juvenile sawfish depend on shallow habitats with a lot of vegetation, such as mangrove forests and seagrass beds. As a result, any project in or near these areas are subject to special permitting scrutiny. An Estero Bay dredging project is affecting. The Ceitus Boat Lift is probably next. [\[News Press\]](#) [\[Habitat Map\]](#)

Continued Rain Shortfall Predicted



Drought in most of peninsular Florida continues with NOAA predicting Florida to experience the most severe rain shortfall of anywhere in the nation. SFWMD authorized administrators to implement water restrictions if conditions persist. Estuary flows are already affected but not yet farms & lawns. [\[Sun Sentinel\]](#)

Snook Are Cold Sensitive Too



The common snook, one of Florida's most popular (and tasty) game fish, which, like manatees, can die from exposure to cold. Snook can go belly up when water temperatures drop below 55F, and hundreds of thousands die statewide each winter. [\[News Press\]](#)

DEP Tries to Protect Seagrass



DEP is pushing Lee County to establish no-motor zones in areas where seagrasses are susceptible to damage from boat props. But as with any enforcement action there are always people with differing opinions on needs and methods. [\[Letter on DEP\]](#) [\[Damage Photo\]](#)

Local Heads Water Committee



Florida House Representative Trudi Williams of Fort Myers will head the Florida House Select Committee on Water Policy. Though Williams has years of experience in environmental issues, only time will tell if she will side with industry or the environment. [\[Florida Independent\]](#)